10 Immigrant Gifts, Pluralist Spectacles, and Staging the Modern City and Nation

PART FOUR

Ethnic Folk Cultures and Modern Multicultural Mandates

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Chapter Ten

Immigrant Gifts, Pluralist Spectacles, and Staging the Modern City and Nation

In mid-1960s Toronto, as many as 20,000 people came out for the spectacular Nationbuilders shows that took place on the grandstand stage of the Canadian National Exhibition (CNE) during the last evening of the Labour Day weekend. As a member of the community folk council that mounted what was billed as the "largest folk festival in Canada," the International Institute of Metropolitan Toronto considered this (and other) multi-ethnic extravaganzas an integral part of their cultural mandate. A central goal of that mandate was to encourage Canadian appreciation for the talents and cultural gifts of immigrants and to promote a vision, or reimagining,[1] of a robustly pluralist city and nation.

The eclectic but polished Nationbuilders shows featured a dizzying array of performers. The 1964 program included more than 50 music ensembles and a cast of 1,500 "young Canadians" who delivered performances "in the native costumes of the land of their fathers." Sir Ernest MacMillan, described as the "patriarch" of Canada's conductors, led the "mass choir" of 500 singers from Toronto's many ethnic choirs and choral groups that ended the show. In regard to the emotional impact that such performances could have on an audience, Toronto Institute personnel believed in the unifying and transformative power of music and performance. The Nationbuilders and other events under review invited Anglo-Canadians, ethno-Canadians of all origins, and newcomers to participate in a festive affair intended to lift both the hearts and minds of audiences.

Insofar as the Nationbuilders shows brought an impressive number of newcomers into one of the defining public spaces of the city of Toronto, the CNE, they mark, too, the emergence of Toronto's immigrants as part of a wider culturally consuming public. The success of the shows, the costumes for which cost an estimated $100,000, served, paradoxically, to both reify immigrant folk cultures and legitimize public displays of cultural difference. It also encouraged still bolder experiments in promoting ethnic diversity through popular spectacle. Aided by the wider folk and white-ethnic revivals of the post-1945 and

sixties eras, the Toronto Institute coordinated and participated in many collaboratively organized events. These ranged from the performances and arts and crafts exhibits of the Ethnic Weeks and Canadiana Weeks initiated by its first director, Nell West, to the folk festivals and, by 1969, the first iteration of what became Toronto's largest annual multicultural event, Metro International Caravan. In doing so, the Institute played a significant but largely unacknowledged role in helping to solidify Toronto's image as Canada's most culturally diverse city and to broadcast that image nationally in an era when diversity essentially meant the inclusion of white European cultures.[2]

Many Institute folks were involved in mounting these events, but most active were the women. The Institute's female cultural organizers included its middle-class directors, West and, later, Tine Stewart, its well-connected Anglo volunteers, its group work staff, and a variety of ethno-Canadian volunteers. This cultural activism, argued its advocates, contributed to pluralist civic-mindedness and nation-building in at least four ways. First, by bringing together immigrant, ethnic, and Canadian community groups to work collaboratively to help mount these events, the Institute was fostering mutual understanding, respect, and appreciation among old and new Canadians. Second, the events themselves inspired the public audiences, who took in the emotionally moving or lighthearted performances and the uplifting festive cultures of "others," to become enthusiasts of a more inclusive Canadian nation. Third, by taking immigrants out of their isolation or ethnic clusters to perform for, educate, and interact with Canadians, these pluralist spectacles helped to both preserve and promote cherished ethnic traditions and put them to use in the service of the nation. Finally, by encouraging in everyone, including English Canadians, a more cosmopolitan outlook, these popular spectacles were helping to build in Toronto an "international community," or local "United Nations," that could act as a model for the postwar nation.[3]

This chapter highlights the Institute women's efforts to effect a more fully multicultural reimagining of post-1945 Toronto and Canada through a cultural program of immigrant gifts and spectacles. That project was rooted in the paradoxical claim that immigrants could retain their cultural distinctiveness through a celebration of their "traditional" cultures (understood primarily as folk cultures) while simultaneously adopting Canadian values and integrating into the mainstream. In contrast to the health and trade-training campaigns and employment counselling, the cultural activism arguably had a more therapeutic (as in promoting inter-group harmony and keeping harsh realities at bay) than a reform-oriented goal (seeking to improve individual opportunities).[4] To dismiss this cultural activism as simply feel-good multiculturalism would, however, ignore its political aim – to encourage the loyalty of an increasingly heterogeneous population to the dominant liberal ideal of Canada as an enlightened democratic nation further enriched by immigrant gifts – and the

contest and negotiation it entailed. Acutely aware that the success of their cultural events required the participation of an array of performers and audiences, the Institute women and their male colleagues courted and negotiated with the city's ethnic male elites and their cultural representatives, who had their own reasons for participating, or not, in these events.

My analysis of this cultural activity engages the scholarship on pageantry, spectacle, and commemoration, as well as that on nation-building. This literature has shed much light on the significant but uneven process of identity formation and cultural belonging and the creation of social meaning – as well as constructed and erased pasts – at different levels and among different groups of participants.[5] It has explored the impact of contemporary politics on commemorative pageantry and examined the cultural assertion of ethnic groups who were "negotiating the terms of their solicited participation" in official pageantry.[6] The Institute's eclectic cultural events contained a paradoxical mix of elements, including those associated with the liberal anti-modernism of cultural promoters whose projection of rural peoples as timeless folk served the modern tourist's nostalgic desire to visit a "quaint" past.[7] Ultimately, however, the Institute sought primarily to harness ethnic folk traditions to a modernist project in pluralist nation-building.

The chapter also traces the cross-border features of the Toronto Institute's popular pluralism, showing how it aligned with a history of US and Canadian efforts to promote a cultural pluralism that both celebrated and appropriated ethnic customs through a mosaic and treasure chest imaginary. In doing so, it contributes as well to the growing historical scholarship on the roots of multiculturalism in North America. Here, the focus is more on its popular manifestations rather than its intellectual attributes.[8] I argue, too, that the Toronto Institute's cultural pluralism informed late-twentieth-century multiculturalism in Canada, though not in any simple or linear fashion. My more bottom-up approach helps to explain why a federal policy forged in part for political reasons, both cynical and strategic, gained support particularly among many ordinary English Canadians within a relatively short period of time.[9]

Populist Predecessors

The immigrant-gifts approach that informed the Toronto Institute's cultural efforts to use immigrant folk traditions to promote immigrant integration and cultural diversity was inscribed in the mission statement accompanying its logo. A stylized Canada goose "winging over the Seven Seas," the logo was designed by Danish Canadian artist and commercial designer Thor Hansen in symbolic reference to the Institute's "work with people from around the world." The accompanying text declared that each newcomer carries with them "an abundance of gifts … rich with the qualities that make this country great," and

that all those "who help the newcomers express their abundant gifts share in enriching our country's future" and "nourish our nation's heart."[10]

This activity drew on both US and Canadian precedents. Toronto's gifts vocabulary echoed that of the wider international institute movement it officially joined in 1956. The US Institutes' pluralism drew inspiration initially from settlement house leaders, the earliest among the Progressive-era reformers to appreciate that Old World cultural forms survived in the immigrant communities. In the 1920s, prominent figures such as Jane Addams and Grace Abbott, both of Chicago, became leading proponents of an immigrant-gifts ideology. Arguing that immigrant customs did not threaten but instead enriched US society, the settlements expanded their offerings beyond English, civics, and educational programs to include ethnic folk events and pageants. The stage at Addams' Hull House regularly featured the Italian tarantella, Irish jig, and other folk performances. The staff occasionally recruited "native-born" Americans to perform in a Greek tragedy or in some other artistic production in order to increase their appreciation for the immigrants' rich cultural heritages.[11]

As US historian Kristin Hoganson notes, many women participated in the interwar era's gifts movement, including professionalizing social workers, teachers, and municipal officials as well as women's and civic groups. In opposition to the dominant assimilationist ethos of the "melting pot" and "100 per-cent American" movements, they argued not only that immigrants brought valuable gifts to America, but also that, far from undermining national loyalty, acknowledging their cultural distinctiveness and celebrating their nostalgic folk cultures fostered greater patriotism among them. This paradoxical mix of celebrating and appropriating ethnic folk cultures endemic to the immigrant-gifts movement was evident in venues across the nation, including in the Fourth of July parades where immigrant and first-generation Americans in ethnic dress pledged allegiance to the US while performing homeland folk songs and dances. Viewed through the conceptual framework of invented (as opposed to primordial) ethnicity, however, the mix of ethnic and hostland elements that marked ethnic celebrations of American holidays signified not a simple march towards Americanization but instead, as Ellen Litwicki notes, "illuminate[d] the dialectical relationship between ethnicity and assimilation." Situated at the intersection of ethnic and hostland cultures, such celebrations "constituted the intertwined products of the traditions and history of immigrants' homelands and their responses and adaptation to life in the United States." The observation also applies to Canada.[12]

Not surprising given the US history of slavery, anti-Asian racism, and imperialism in Latin America, US pluralists were more receptive to the cultural gifts of European derivation than those of African, Asian, or Mexican origins, though public celebrations of these "other" folk cultures certainly occurred. Public schools were major institutions of assimilation, but teachers also joined

these efforts, organizing Pageants of Nations and folk-dance performances. Librarians ordered materials and helped with community events, which popular writers applauded as an effective way of bringing people together in friendly cooperation.[13]

The conversion of Edith Terry Bremer to pluralism in the 1920s similarly influenced the international institute movement that she founded in 1910. Aided in part by guidebooks and experts dispatched by the central body in New York City, local Institutes – which also produced homegrown pluralists – quickly adopted an immigrant gifts mandate. They diversified the "native-born" American staff by hiring immigrant and ethnic "nationality workers" to run classes in Old World history and culture. Often college graduates with some social work training, these foreign-born and first-generation US women organized performances and crafts along ethnic themes.[14]

The US Institutes' increasing emphasis on fostering ethnic consciousness and ethnic pride in immigrant heritage distinguished them from immigrant-gifts Americanizers who, like the YWCA that spawned them, adopted a more assimilationist position. By the 1930s, most Institutes, having declared that pluralism and integration could represent complementary rather than contradictory goals, had severed their ties with the YWCA and merged into a national movement that, as Raymond Mohl notes, carried out a paradoxical mandate of "both promoting cultural and ethnic pluralism and seeking better integration of immigrants and their children in American society." A primary means by which they promoted the message that diversity not conformity, and cooperation not conflict, were the essence of US democracy, was through an array of cultural events imbued with an immigrant-gifts philosophy.[15]

Diana Selig has documented the expansion of the interwar gifts movement into the major institutions of US life, including religious institutions and schools. An array of mostly middle-class liberal intellectuals, social scientists, child experts, educators, and Christian and Jewish clerics, as well as African American and various ethnic groups, sought to challenge the era's intensified xenophobia with demonstrations, interfaith events, child-study groups, and other programs promoting an alternative vision of tolerance and acceptance of cultural diversity. That gifts advocates eschewed radical critiques of class inequities or Jim Crow racism attests to the movement's cautious character.[16] The advent of wartime patriotism dampened some of these efforts, though, as Ellen Wu documents, an "Americans All" variant of liberal pluralism propelled Asian American groups to successfully wage a campaign of inclusion through emphasis on loyalty through military service and compatible family values to ultimately project themselves as model minorities. Still, overall, notes Selig, certain key, and limiting, features of this pluralism, such as the privileging of European folk cultures and a reluctance to address "the socio-economic systems that uphold racism" would resurface in late-twentieth-century multiculturalism.[17]

By then, however, very different factors came into play, including the civil rights movement and left-wing interracial urban alliances.[18]

When Toronto joined the institute movement in 1956, pluralism was still very much a minority position in Canada. Like their US interwar predecessors, West and company saw much of value in an immigrant-gifts pluralism. But unlike their post-1945 US counterparts, which initially focused on refugee resettlement cases,[19] Toronto Institute personnel immediately embraced the wide-ranging cultural mandates of the interwar era. They also consulted contemporary materials like the upbeat pamphlet on the Philadelphia Institute's 1960 Folk Fair that spoke of "35 nationalities and 3,000 people" enacting "a global event in the heart of the city of Brotherly Love."[20] An equally optimistic report by Elisabeth Ponafidine, an Italian American director of Buffalo's International Institute, was printed in the Toronto Institute newsletter, the *Intercom*. In it, she portrayed immigrants as talented people whose willingness to have their gifts "poured into the ever-changing framework of American life" would help to "create something new through the fusion of their talents, their homes, and aspirations," thereby laying "the foundations of love and understanding."[21]

The Toronto Institute's immigrant-gifts pluralism also had long roots in Canada even if a US travel writer, Victoria Hayward, coined that quintessential Canadian term, "mosaic." In her 1922 travelogue, *Romantic Canada*, she invoked the term in reference to the diversity she found during her cross-Canada tour, including in the European church architecture of the prairies, and, in orientalist fashion, the Japanese fishermen who plied the Fraser River in British Columbia. She referred to them as men of the "Far East" transplanted to "a river of the Far West." Hayward's patronizing portraits of the friendly Gaelic housewives of the Maritimes, Quebec's "quaint French villages," Abenaki basket makers, and Mennonite villages reflected an American's view that the presence of still culturally distinct immigrants and Indigenous peoples created an exotic landscape.[22]

Kate A. Foster's survey of "New Canadians" for the Dominion Council of the YWCA in 1926, entitled *Our Canadian Mosaic*, is a more slippery text. Some historians place it within a tradition of British Canadian imaginings of a national culture rooted primarily in Anglo-Saxon traditions but "enriched" by the addition of "other national elements." Criticizing a pluralist reading of the text, Susan Bellay argues that, while Foster later accepted a pluralist position, her 1926 book did not praise the cosmopolitanism of an emerging nation, but instead viewed immigration as "a problem in assimilation." And it endorsed Anglo-cultural homogeneity.[23]

The era's exemplary experiment in reimagining the Canadian nation through a populist pluralist frame was the interwar folk festivals that John Murray Gibbon organized on behalf of the Canadian Pacific Railway (CPR). Together, Gibbon's festivals (1927–31) and his 1938 book, *Canadian Mosaic,* popularized the

term (mosaic) that would come to exemplify, as Ian McKay notes, post-colonial British Canadian urban modernity. A Scot born in Ceylon, Gibbon wrote *Canadian Mosaic* at a time when he was an influential figure in Canadian culture, having been involved in the founding of the Canadian Authors' Association (1921) and the Governor General's Literary Awards (1936). The book, which snagged the top literary prize in 1938, did much to propel into the mainstream the notion of Canada as a mosaic in which "different cultural identities coexist and contribute to a unified whole," but neither its approach nor its thesis was entirely original.[24]

Like Foster and others, Gibbon profiled the different European immigrant groups (he called them "races"). He listed their common characteristics and assessed them in terms of their compatibility with British ones, whether due to innate traits (as with the Scandinavians) or historical links with Britain (as with the Czechs). Given the importance accorded Gibbon "in the evolution of a bilingual, multicultural, national culture in Canada,"[25] it bears stressing that he excluded Asian, Indigenous, and African Canadian groups from his category of Canadian belonging. In his view, the community-based churches and clubs of the acceptable groups were the cement that would hold together new and old Canadian groups. Like other advocates of a British Canadian pluralism, Gibbon also put great stock in the malleability of the immigrants' children and considered the English Canadian public school system the most efficient means, or adhesive, by which to ensure a new generation of Canadians. Gibbon imagined that a superior because still emphatically Anglo-Saxon Canadian race would emerge from the commingling of the British and the "best" European groups, and his profiles were steeped in the period's race-based theories of biological traits and eugenics. All this fit with early-twentieth-century currents of Anglo-Canadian pluralism.[26]

As McKay and others observe, Gibbon's highly successful folk-festivals-cum-tourist-extravaganzas implemented a strategy of pursuing national unity amid growing ethnic diversity not through political or social engineering, but by "corralling" colourful and supposedly authentic folk cultures into populist celebrations.[27] As a university student at Oxford, Gibbon became enamoured with early twentieth-century romanticism and the nationalist folk revival movement it spawned in Europe. By the time he became chief publicist for the CPR, he was a consummate cultural entrepreneur whose efforts to reimagine a nationalist ideology amid growing diversity reflected his long-time advocacy of the commercial uses of folk culture. Drawing on a concept of immigrants as the bearers of timeless, premodern folk cultures, Gibbon's festivals reflected the view that, when celebrated together, these cultures offered an entertaining, hence unthreatening, assemblage of colourful dress, music, dance, and crafts that "served to minimize differences between cultures while seeming to provide an instance of democratic pluralism."[28] With British, European, and French

groups in "picturesque" costumes and quaint handicrafts for sale, the prairie festivals visualized British Canadian pluralism. The performing immigrant groups were the colourful tiles in the mosaic, their complex histories rendered largely irrelevant, while Canada's geography, climate, and "founding" British peoples (with a tokenistic nod to the French co-founders) the "cements" that held the tiles in place.[29]

Like his counterparts at the US Institutes, Gibbon believed in the power of spectacle to change people's views of foreigners. Folk festivals, he argued, nurtured patriotism by encouraging appreciation especially among Anglo-Canadians for the newcomers. Speaking of his first festival in Winnipeg, which highlighted European settlement, he used a gifts vocabulary, saying it would prove "to Anglo-Saxon Canadians" that continental Europeans "have a fine gift of music and artistry for the making of the Canadian nation."[30] As in the United States, the populist advocates of interwar pluralism in Canada were not an entirely monolithic group, however. They also included ethno-cultural impresarios like the Ukrainian émigré, and cross-border folk-dance performer, Vasile Avramenko. As Orest Martynowych documents, the controversial "showman" used folk dance (and later film) to promote Ukraine's struggle for independence to Canadian and US audiences. After arriving in Canada in 1925, Avramenko established a network of Ukrainian folk-dance schools by appealing to Ukrainian immigrants' homeland loyalties and desire for cultural survival. By the mid-1930s, however, he had lost a fortune trying to parlay his success into a career on Broadway (his dance and music spectacles flopped) and then in Hollywood filmmaking. With his career in serious decline after the Second World War, Avramenko would spend the decades before his death in 1981 failing to secure sponsors in Australia, Israel, and elsewhere.[31]

Then, too, there were the organized ethnic groups that mounted their own public spectacles, and that chose to participate, or not, in state agendas to foster nationalism through commemorative pageantry. Here, Robert Cupido's research into the festivities organized in 1927 for the diamond jubilee of Canadian Confederation is particularly noteworthy. His analysis of the Canadian federal state's first major foray into nationwide commemorative organizing highlights how the ethnic groups invited to participate in a British Canadian–defined display of pan-Canadian nationalism disrupted the official narrative by flaunting their ethnic-group identities and histories. The colourful pageants and folk cultures of the city's marginalized Eastern European groups that were on public display in multiethnic Winnipeg, the site of the most elaborate pageant, asserted (in dialectical fashion) an alternative, pluralistic vision of Canadianness.[32]

The Toronto Institute's efforts to promote a popular form of cultural pluralism that could appeal to many "ordinary" Canadians reveal striking parallels with Gibbon's CPR festivals, though my analysis, like Cupido's, also highlights

the agency of the ethnic actors involved. Once again, the celebrations of Canada's ever-expanding mosaic, or ever-enriching treasure chest (to use another popular metaphor) represented efforts to calm anxieties provoked by mass migration and urge ethnic harmony and political unity amid growing diversity. In each case, those efforts both drew on and contributed to a contemporary folk revival movement. As for differences, post-1945 immigration contributed even more significantly to the growing ethnic heterogeneity of Canada's population and, beginning in the late 1960s, to its racial diversity as well. Also, Toronto's popular pluralism was part of a more sustained effort that also included social welfare supports, and benefited from its location in the richest and arguably most influential city in Canada.[33]

Old World Bazaars and New World Gifts

The Institute's tourist-oriented fairs and bazaars were both fundraisers and experiments in community-based pluralism. They involved creating the Old World ambience of a European market or carnival where people could encounter different cultures while remaining safely at home. For the first of its bazaars – a four-day fair in 1957 that interrupted normal programs – the newly affiliated Institute used every space in its St Andrew's building on Jarvis Street to set up colourful booths and displays of crafts, games, and food in an effort to create a mix of Old World charm and New World modernity. In the style of a circus barker luring customers with promises of fun and adventure, the flyer announced "expert palmistry, teacup reading and fortune telling" and the chance to "feel rich" by joining a "millionaire's night." Promising a delightfully foreign shopping excursion for minimal cost, it added that, with handicrafts by artists from many ethnic groups, each item with its own "distinctive design and national character," the adventurous shopper could impress family and friends with "distinctive" gifts, from hats to trays. Or the fairgoer could buy "beautiful and unusual Christmas cards of many lands." The flyer also encouraged people to socialize and end the night on the "gaily decorated" dance floor where, thanks to the Institute's professional dance instructors, they could try everything "from ballroom to hulahula."[34]

In claiming that such events helped the ethnic groups "maintain their folk art and handicrafts in Canada" by introducing them to a larger market, Institute staff combined a certain romantic wistfulness with modernist sentiments about nation-building. As such, they exhibited a degree of nostalgic modernism, a form of liberal anti-modernism informed by an uneasy symbiotic relationship between folklore preservation and faith in capitalist progress.[35] But the emphasis was on complementarity: folklore preservation (unique ethnic handicrafts) existed alongside a faith in capitalist modernity (consumption as a nation-building tool). As the agency's Estonian group work supervisor put it,

A woman dressed as a twenties-era flapper poses with a man dressed in a striped prison uniform during Carnival night at the International Institute on Jarvis Street, c. 1958. Archives of Ontario, F884-2-9, B427166.

through their interactions and purchase of traditional folk crafts, the participants were contributing to "building a new and richer society."[36]

The bazaars hardly provide dramatic examples of what Mikhail Bakhtin called the carnivalesque – events that take on a time-out-of-time character, involving elements of social inversion and/or levelling.[37] Muted expressions of it existed in, for example, the references to labouring immigrants playing (with pennies) at being millionaires, but the focus on fun and domestic tourism (literally buying immigrant gifts) meant little risk of subverting hierarchies of any kind. The stronger message was that, as people soaked up the ambience of an Old World market and joined in a folk dance and a modern cha-cha-cha,

a sense of collective belonging would replace the instinctual tendency to huddle with one's own kind – a prerequisite for forging a modern enlightened pluralist community. This strategy of mining folk cultures for modernist goals was also captured in an article on the postwar folk revival that appeared at the same time in the Institute's just launched newsletter. Author Anne Von Oesen attributed the recent resurgence in the popularity of "a long time ago folk lore" that "abounds with imaginary heroes and heroines; in gnomes and witches; nymphs and monsters, etc." to the "yearning" of a sophisticated civilization "for its own simple interpretations of beauty and warmth." But she also emphasized that a knowledge of folk art and how it made its way into the poems, plays, and music of great writers and composers would help modern citizens understand much about modern cultures and nations.[38]

Gift Giving and Receiving Spectacles

The Institute's pluralist stance as gifts promoters was especially evident in the two cultural programs that West launched in 1957, the Ethnic Weeks and Canadiana Weeks. A "community project" to showcase the "cultural attributes" of Toronto's "local ethnic communities" and promote "closer understanding between 'New' and 'Old' Canadians,"[39] each Ethnic Week celebrated a given group's culture with concerts, films, lectures, exhibits, music, dance, and food.[40] Insofar as they offered a packaged pageantry of colourful performances, exhibits, and decorated banquet buffets, they underscore Philip Bohlman's insight about folk festivals being institutional vehicles by which "ethnicity is made manageable." And they illustrated precisely what immigrants were to do with their talents and customs: place them in Canada's treasure chest.[41]

An estimated 300 people attended the Sunday afternoon tea that kicked off the inaugural Polish Ethnic Week in February 1957. The Ethnic Week concerts that followed the afternoon teas typically featured classically trained singers and musicians; in this case, it was baritone Roman Severin, violinist Annette Wegiel, and pianist Josephine Jagusia. Overall, however, the week-long program highlighted folk culture, including dance performances, a film on Polish history ("Homeland of My Mother"), and an arts and crafts exhibit.[42] Other Ethnic Weeks mounted that season, including German, Lithuanian, and Latvian ones, delivered similarly folk-dominated but eclectic programs that attracted similarly sized audiences. The audiences were composed of a mix of Institute members and their relatives or friends – volunteers, English teachers, and other staff along with the friends or colleagues to whom they sold tickets – and those who learned about the event in an English- or foreign-language newspaper.[43]

With the limited space at St Andrew's, the Institute also adopted a one-evening format. One of the Ethnic Nights held in spring 1959 was Greek

Sunday, whose musical program included "accordion solos, Classical and popular numbers, Rhythms of Greece." For St George's Day, an English holiday, stage actor and radio personality Charles Hayter sang some Elizabethan and Shakespearian songs as well as regional folk songs in original dialect. The latter included "Cheshire Man" (Cheshire) and "Turnip Hoeing" (Wiltshire).[44] Following the Institute's move shortly afterwards to College Street, with its renovated auditorium (capacity 1,000) and cabaret space (300–50), West and colleagues resumed the week-long programs.

West argued that the Ethnic Weeks "can do much to increase the [Canadian] community support of ethnic organizations, increase inter-ethnic understanding and further promote the cultural contribution that ethnic groups are making to Canada." She knew, too, that the better the Institute could "mirror" the "variety" of Toronto's "cultural heritages," the greater its claim to being a laboratory in multicultural community living. The much bigger space did boost their profile; throughout the College Street years, the special events attracted capacity crowds.[45]

This was true of the successful Hungarian Week held in November 1963. Toronto mayor and folk-culture advocate Donald Summerville opened the program with a ribbon-cutting ceremony at the arts and crafts exhibit. For the concert, the "famed" Hungarian Kodály Ensemble of Toronto, a choral, orchestra, and folk-dance group, drew from their repertoire of peasant and soldier-themed songs and dances. It included music composed by Zoltán Kodály, the twentieth-century Hungarian classical composer and music educator who became an influential folk-song collector and promoter, and that of contemporary colleagues like Béla Bartók. People returned each night to take in films, lectures on Hungarian architecture and history, poetry readings, the Kodály Ensemble again, and, on Saturday night, a Hungarian dance and floor show in the Hungarian-themed cabaret space.[46]

With the help of the well-connected men on the board, the Institute women, along with the male directors, worked hard to recruit dignitaries for the Ethnic Weeks because their presence lent prestige and attracted the mainstream media. For the ethnic media, they tapped the mainly European networks that West particularly nurtured, including through invitations to socials and, at least on one occasion, to her lodge in Muskoka.[47] The Institute's relationship with Summerville, who died shortly after the 1963 Hungarian week, was closer than with most public figures because of their mutual involvement in the founding of the Toronto-based Community Folk Art Council (CFAC). His presence largely explains the coverage the event received in the mainstream press (see below).[48]

The (less demanding) Ethnic Nights or Sundays also grew more frequent on College Street and then became the norm after the move, in 1969, to Davenport Road. There was no Italian or Portuguese Week, but Italian and Portuguese variety nights were held at the Institute and local restaurants. Using a gifts

Folk singer George Brown performs North American songs at the Institute, 1961. Archives of Ontario, F884-2-9, B427166.

vocabulary, the flyer for a 1961 Italian "Continental Café" described the performers as "foreign-born professionals … who – if given the opportunity – are not only able but willing to enrich Canada's cultural life."[49] In her enthusiastic report on the Portuguese Festival held in January 1968, Portuguese counsellor Maria Mota said that those who braved the cold winter night were "well rewarded" with "magnificent performances." She described the featured folk singer Isabel Santos as Toronto's Amália Rodrigues, a celebrated Portuguese singer of *fado* (nostalgic folk songs) whose international reputation was due largely to a forties hit song ("April in Portugal") that enjoyed renewed popularity following its re-recording in the fifties by French and US singers. The night also featured folk dances performed by Rancho Da Nazere and other troupes associated with the city's First Portuguese Canadian Club. People danced to the popular music supplied by the Da Boa Esperança band, also of Toronto.[50]

From the start, the Institute did include cultural performances by racialized groups such as Chinese Canadians. By the 1960s, the cultural gifts of racialized immigrants were celebrated through the Caribbean-themed Calypso evenings and, at decade's end, an India Night with "Classical and Folk Dances," music, and films. In the early 1970s, the Institute promoted the events of its tenant, the Tibetan Cultural Society, and an Asian youth festival.[51] Overall, however, the

Women like these hostesses dressed in Lithuanian national dress made out of colourful textiles welcomed people to the Institute's Ethnic Weeks and other cultural events. Note also the hand-crafted dolls and wood-carved decorative spinning wheel. Archives of Ontario, F884-2-9, B427166.

Institute carried out its experiment in cultural pluralism within a mainly white European and Anglo-Canadian context. The two key ingredients for success were the ethnic groups' "readiness" to "come out of their isolation and present themselves to the [Canadian] community," and the "voluntary, spontaneous interest of the Canadian public" in attending and participating in these events.[52] Even if English Canadians had to be cajoled into attending, their appreciation of the performances was paramount.

If the Institute's Ethnic Weeks and nights created cultural spectacles in which immigrants symbolically offered their talents and gifts to Canada, the Canadiana Weeks served in part to symbolically accept them into an ever-expanding Canadian treasure chest that, through its collection and absorption of the

A Latvian folk-dance troupe that performed at the Institute on Jarvis Street in 1958. Archives of Ontario, F884-2-9, B427166.

Young women perform traditional Chinese dances at the Institute on Jarvis Street, 1958. Archives of Ontario, F884-2-9, B427166.

The Chinese dragon dance was part of the line-up of several Institute-sponsored multicultural shows. Here, the performers and spectators are in front of Mon Kuo Trading Co. Ltd., 120 Elizabeth Street in the Ward. York University Libraries, Clara Thomas Archives & Special Collections, Toronto Telegram fonds, ASC02735.

cultures of successive waves of immigrants, became enriched. They were also meant to educate and inspire feelings of loyalty to Canada. As the fall event kicking off a new season of programs, the Canadiana Weeks followed a familiar format but put Canadian, especially Anglo-Canadian, history and culture on display. Canadian folk singers (both traditional and commercial), arts and crafts, and a ceremonial marking of historic events considered key in Canada's evolution from British colony to mature nation, filled the programs. The nationalist narrative contained a pluralist interpretation of Canada as a nation whose two founding races, but especially the British, had learned first to tolerate, then accept, and finally celebrate the cultures of others. This narrative underlay the highly eclectic Anglo-Canadian spectacles, which also stressed the diversity of Scots, Irish, and other groups that comprised Canada and Ontario's British population. There was also some French Canadian, Indigenous, and European content.

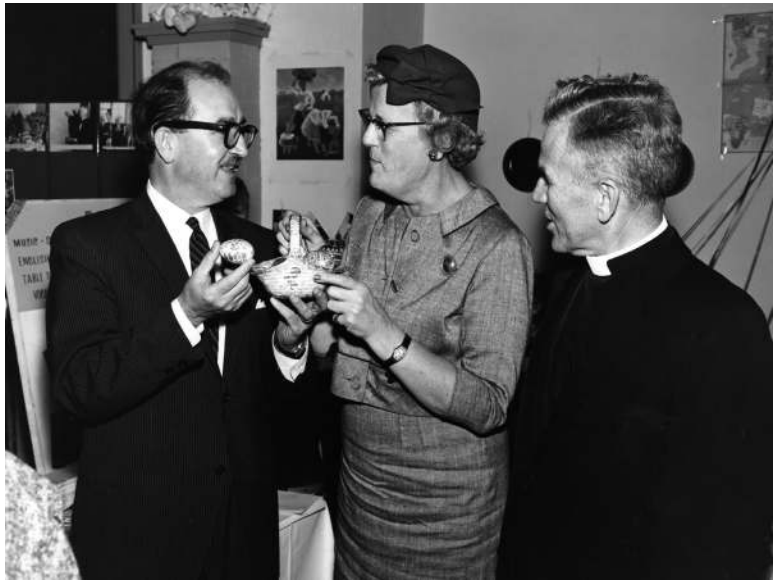
More than six hundred people attended the Sunday opening ceremonies of the first Canadiana Week in September 1957 hosted by John Yaremko, a Ukrainian Canadian lawyer and member of the Ontario legislature. One of

several Ukrainian Canadian leaders that would claim or receive recognition as a "father" of multiculturalism, Yaremko later returned to the Institute as Ontario's provincial secretary and minister of citizenship. (In the early 1970s, he served on the Institute's board.) The text of Yaremko's speech for the 1957 event is not available, but in other speeches that acknowledged the Institute, he declared that newcomers "enrich themselves and our nation" by preserving their culture and drawing from the "equally rich storehouse of the two cultures which lie at the root of this nation."[53]

Set against a colourful backdrop of flags, the 1957 Canadiana festivities included the Hungarian Kodály Choir's "soaring" rendition of "O Canada" and a "lively" and "festive" recital delivered by a young German pianist, Horst Minkofski-Garrigues.[54] But it was the Canadian content and lessons provided through the performances, films, lectures, books, and paintings that dominated this and subsequent Canadiana Weeks. A reported highlight was a "fascinating" lecture by Eric Morse, executive secretary of the Canadian Clubs movement. A joint event held with the YWCA and the YMCA at the Central "Y" in downtown Toronto, Morse's colour-slide show celebrated his recent escapade with five other "adventurers" who, "guided by maps, air photos, and early diaries," retraced the canoe routes of the early explorers and fur traders. His conclusion – that, 1600 miles later, he could report that Canada's landscape "has hardly changed since the white man first came" – suggests how a colonial gaze erased Indigenous peoples. An NFB film made for tourists featuring "scenic vistas" and "people of many ethnic origins" highlighted the diversity and industry of Canada's settler people as well as the landscape.[55]

The ubiquitous presence of folk music at the Canadiana Weeks was in evidence in the sixties-era programs, whose opening concerts included a mix of European folk songs, African American gospel music, and Canadian folk songs. The immigrant component in 1963 came in the form of some "country dances" performed by the International Folk Troupe at University Settlement House, a west end settlement, led by staffer Ivy Krehm.[56] An eclectic program also characterized the successful opening of Canadiana Week in 1965, when a thousand people filled the auditorium to hear Toronto's first Jewish mayor, Nathan Phillips, accompanied by John Gellner, the Czech Canadian president of the Institute board, praise the ethnic groups for their many contributions to Canada. An Institute group member, Gateway to Entertainment, staged a Continental European Caravan with European folk songs, piano and accordion solos, the Spanish flamenco (with guitar), and the French can-can.[57]

English Canada enjoyed centre stage at the Canadiana Weeks, but some attention was paid to the folk culture of Quebec and francophone Ontario. The organizers sought to instil pride in and loyalty to the nation among mixed audiences through the use of dramatic imagery, the ceremonial marking of achievements, and bold predictions of still further progress. Each year, the Toronto



Nell West hosting John Yaremko (left, holding a small basket with decorated eggs) and a priest during an Institute cultural event, c. 1960. Archives of Ontario, F884-2-9, B427166.

Art Gallery (now the Art Gallery of Ontario) lent paintings by officially celebrated "masters" who, either in traditional (such as Cornelius Krieghoff's peasant-themed "Habitants Sleighing") or modern style (Emily Carr's "Kispiax Village" featuring West Coast totem poles) captured what were heralded as quintessentially Canadian subjects. With their muscular renditions of the Canadian landscape (erased of Indigenous peoples), the paintings by members of the Group of Seven might offer quick nationalist lessons in the beauty and vastness of Canada and the spirit and strength of a white-settler northern people.[58]

The 1965 program featured Confederation Life Insurance Company's collection of commissioned paintings depicting historic Canadian subjects, or, rather, some glossy reproductions. No stranger to nationalist pageantry, Confederation Life had published a brochure of its paintings to encourage schools, service clubs, and local communities to celebrate the approaching hundredth anniversary of Canadian Confederation by providing ideas for "suitable" commemorative histories, pageants, and tableaux.[59] What it meant by "suitable" is suggested by the pamphlet's inclusion of John David Kelly's paintings of the 1885 North-West Rebellion, a Métis and First Nations resistance crushed by an expanding Canadian state but officially touted as a victory for white-settler civilization and a historic achievement in modern nation building.[60] The pamphlet's

narrative combined a romantic view of Canada's heroic past and its supposed openness to "other" peoples with an optimistic assessment of the nation's future "greatness." There is plenty of "forgetting" here of less exemplary acts like Canada's Chinese exclusionary regime and the thoroughly discredited church- and government-run residential schools that sought to assimilate Indigenous children to the lowest rungs of white society. The message that "Canada's phenomenal development" reflected the "contributions of the men and races who have followed" the original explorers to this land, fit well the Institute's claims that, having grown stronger from incorporating earlier waves of immigrant talents and cultures, Canada was poised to become a model pluralist nation.[61]

Folk Festivals and Multicultural Extravaganzas

The Institute made its first foray into mega-festival organizing in June 1957 as a founding member of the new Ontario Folk Festival Society – whose goal was to "promote good citizenship" through the advocacy of "the folk arts that are the heritage of Canada's people of every racial and religious background." It did so by piggybacking onto an established venue, the (modestly priced) annual John Madsen Folk Festival, a Saturday stage-show extravaganza involving several thousand people at a folk school based on a farm just outside Toronto. While the performers at Institute events came mainly through the affiliated ethnocultural groups, more commercial ventures like the Madsen Folk Festival, established in 1948 by a Danish Canadian couple, tapped into a wider semi-professional North American circuit. The performers themselves combined or straddled classical and popular traditions. Choral groups, for example, performed folk songs and sacred (liturgical) music as well as choral pieces written or interpreted by classically trained composers influenced by folk traditions. Similarly, gospel singers often had some classical training while opera-trained singers often performed ethnic folk songs.[62]

Described as "perfection!" the 1957 jointly sponsored event involved the usual procession of high school marching bands and "Scottish" bagpipers and a jam-packed show with hundreds of performers belonging to more than twenty groups from across North America. In addition to the English country dances, a few French Canadian folk songs, and many European performances, the Madsen festival typically included a few more "exotic" dances of Indonesian, African, Indigenous, or other origins, though the coverage of the 1957 event contains no such references. But things did end as usual, with a (bring-your-own) picnic supper, mass square-dancing on the greens, and a singalong around a large bonfire.[63] The Institute's entry into mega-festival organizing was also helped, albeit indirectly, by commercial ventures like the CNE's annual Canadiana variety show, which, by the late 1950s, added more ethnic folk content to a mainly Canadian line-up that included the Canadian Armed Forces Drill

Squad or the RCMP Musical Ride, and Canadian folk singers. The hosts were usually American personalities expected to be big draws, such as comedians Danny Kaye and George Gobel.[64]

West's successor as Institute director, H.C. Forbell – who worked with West and others to expand their cultural mandate – articulated the logic behind the large festivals. Toronto, Forbell asserted in 1961, had gained "such cultural talent" and "innumerable artistic treasures" from immigration that it was time to focus on "mount[ing] major multicultural events celebrating the Canadian mosaic." The smaller events staged by the individual ethnic groups, he reasoned, had a role to play in preserving and promoting ethnic customs within the immigrant communities and among subsequent generations. The nation's interests, however, were best served by large venues where the immigrants' "artistic and cultural talents" were enjoyed "by all ethnic groups, by immigrants, by new Canadians and by old Canadians." Furthermore, it was the latter's attendance at such events "that the greatest good can be achieved for all concerned." Capturing the Institute's strategy of harnessing "traditional" ethnic folk cultures to a modern and mainly urban nation-building project, Forbell added that the "artistic and cultural talents with which the various ethnic groups are so richly endowed should not be preserved like diamonds in a jeweller's vault," but had "to be used [and] exercised nationally." By so doing, "they will grow and take on a new vitality," both "retain[ing] all the significance of the country of origin" and "tak[ing] on new and meaningful interpretations of this land."[65]

An example of how the Institute carried out this ambitious strategy through collaboration with others is the Nationbuilders shows held in 1964 and 1965. (Similar shows occurred in 1969 and 1970.) As a founding member of the show's sponsor, the Community Folk Art Council of Metropolitan Toronto (CFAC est. 1963), the Institute committed staff time and resources to organizing them.[66] The show followed the city's Labour Day parade at the CNE, which ended in front of the grandstand. Admission was free with admission to the park. The mass choir that concluded the variety show line-up of performances included members of the Lithuanian Varpas Choir, Santa Cecilia Italian Choir, Irish Choral Society, Polonia Choir, and Prometheus Ukrainian Chorus. Gathered in tribute to the recently deceased mayor and founding CFAC chair, Donald Summerville, the "cosmopolitan" choir also closed the 1965 show. The previous year's performance included a "massive melodic folk song panorama of Canadian folk songs," ranging from the "lively sea shanties of Newfoundland to the plaintive ballads of the Prairies." John Fisher, the Centennial Commissioner in charge of planning the country's hundredth anniversary festivities, narrated the two-hour show in 1964 and came as special guest for the 1965 show.[67] All this fit nicely with the Institute's position that, as one staffer put it, "music was the universal language" and "a great unifying factor" that helps people recognize that "we" have "common interests" that must be nurtured.[68]

While a few people later grumbled about the city not having offered more financial support, the Nationbuilders shows were fully orchestrated events produced with all the stage facilities of the grandstand. Its executive producer, Jack Arthur, produced them along with CFAC chair, Leon Kossar. A Ukrainian Canadian folk-culture advocate and cultural entrepreneur, Kossar was a journalist whose *Toronto Telegram* column "New Canadian Interests" promoted this and other ventures. With audiences that ranged between 17,000 and 20,000 people, these were well-attended shows in a venue with a regular maximum seating of between 21,000 and 22,000. The mix of newcomers, ethno-Canadians, and Anglo-Torontonians in the audience were actively participating in an immigrant-gifts pluralism that, for all of its shortcomings, contributed towards legitimizing public displays of cultural difference in Toronto.[69] (The big-ticket CNE concerts that drew larger audiences to an expanded Exhibition Stadium did not begin until the 1970s.) Their success raised Kossar's profile as a cultural entrepreneur and popularizer along the Gibbon model.[70]

This is not to suggest that the Institute's populist pluralism followed a linear trajectory towards larger venues. Its plans to make Toronto both the driving engine and a shining model of a bold cultural pluralism suffered setbacks. City boosters might boast about Toronto having surpassed Montreal as the nation's financial centre, but no city rivalled Montreal during Expo 67, the multi-million-dollar world fair held to celebrate the one hundredth anniversary of Confederation. Expo 67 attracted the most attendees ever to a world fair.[71] The excitement it generated among immigrants as well as Canadians and tourists was evident at the Toronto Institute, where group work staff worked overtime to organize dozens of weekend bus trips to Expo.[72] The Institute and CFAC pledged to rival Montreal with grand plans for a national choral competition, folk festival, and various ethnic food and music preservation projects, but the final production resembled an Institute-style Canadiana Week in both format and size (perhaps just over a thousand attended).[73]

However, two years later, the Institute, under Tine Stewart's directorship, enjoyed its biggest ever success through its role in launching Metro International Caravan. Taking the immigrant-gifts and domestic tourism approach to another level, Metro Caravan became the splashiest multicultural extravaganza in Toronto's history. A pluralist spectacle that combined the elements of a trade show, city booster campaign, nationalist propaganda event, ethnic-group lobby, and tourist venue, Metro Caravan's inaugural summer festival featured thirty international pavilions, or "ports of call," awaiting discovery by Torontonians and visitors to the city. Playing on the tourist conceit, Metro Caravan had people purchase a passport ($2 in 1969) to visit some of the world's capitals and leading cities, most of which were located in ethnic halls and clubs across the metropolitan area. (Expo 67 had used the same gimmick.) The pavilions bore the colours of their city and country, the performers were dressed in bright

costumes, and the hosts, dressed in ethnic regalia, served "authentic national foods, drinks" and "arts and crafts" at reasonable prices. Events were held in the evening so more people could attend. The passport, duly stamped with the cities visited, could be kept as a souvenir or mailed in for a chance to win a trip to an "exotic" locale. In 1969 it was Mexico City.[74]

In keeping with the eclecticism of such events, the opening ceremonies kicking off the five-day festival on 26 June offered a mix of the old and new. City of Toronto Mayor William Allen proclaimed the start of Metro Caravan at Nathan Phillips Square (site of the new City Hall) while flanked by a town crier in medieval regalia. Marching bands played the festival theme song, "The Magic Caravan," an insipid pop tune, and the City Hall performances included a Latvian folk troupe and Irish step dancers. Similar ceremonies took place in all five participating boroughs and special buses moved people across city and suburbs for free. The festivities concluded on Dominion Day (1 July) with a concert at Queen's Park, site of the Ontario legislature, and a parade and street dancing. An immediate success, Metro Caravan attracted 40,000 people in its early years and grew steadily both in duration and number of pavilions. In 1970, some 400,000 people participated. Far outlasting the Institute, it became an integral part of Toronto's multicultural landscape for thirty-five years.[75] Significantly, many middle-class Anglo-Torontonians cite their participation in Metro Caravan as the event that raised their consciousness about the city's growing diversity.[76]

As festival host, Kossar (who also co-wrote the theme song) was the public face of Metro Caravan: wife Zena was centrally involved, too, but reporters named him "Mr. Ethnic Canada." The executive committee both acknowledged that it aimed to replicate the successful "international folk fairs" of US cities such as Toledo, St Paul, Philadelphia, and Detroit – all cities with an International Institute – and boasted about putting on a bigger show "involving 50 civic and community sites." They explained the festival's dual purpose in Institute-style language. One was "to dramatize with quality the many cultural heritages that make up Canada," to ensure the "special participation" of the newcomers, and to provide "a major event that exemplifies the international aspects of Metro Toronto." The other was "to show the public that we have mutual interests in being citizens of Metro Toronto, and proud Canadians no matter what our creed, race, nationality or tradition."[77]

Metro Caravan attracted considerable mainstream media attention from city and national newspapers and newsmagazines. In the 1970s, the *New York Times* and other US publications wrote about Caravan. Most Toronto reporters obliged the organizers of the inaugural Metro Caravan. They played up the cosmopolitan fun and pluralist lessons to be had from a festival that, as *Toronto Telegram* writer Colin Murray claimed, would allow so many to become "a world traveler for six mad carefree days" without the hassle of real travel. "No smallpox vaccinations. No cramped economy seats. No customs inspections. No little

brown pills," he wrote, adding, "just soft candlelight dinners, exotic food, wild international drinks, beautiful girls in brilliant costumes, singing, dancing, international cabarets." In their rush to celebrate the immigrants' cultural gifts, reporters like Murray overlooked the fact that some cities, including Mexico City, were on display not because of an immigrant presence in Toronto but because of the backing of companies and tourism boards hoping to drum up business.[78]

Other columnists, including McKenzie Porter, also of the *Telegram,* wrote seriously about the "cosmopolitanism" of Metro Caravan and urged Toronto's "WASPS" to appreciate, indeed embrace, the "bright, modern, more worldly attitude" that was replacing the city's "old Anglo-Saxon provincialism." The retrograde US "melting pot" also made an appearance. Significantly, Porter acknowledged the Asian as well as European pavilions, and the contributions of non-European groups to the nation. Praising them for having "proven themselves good Canadians without losing their individuality," he invoked the former Liberal prime minister, saying that "the ethnic groups" were "giving us what Lester Pearson described as 'unity in diversity.'"[79] While he did not say so explicitly, Porter's comments underscored the fact that Metro Caravan was taking place against the wider backdrop of the hearings, briefs, conferences, and reports generated by the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism (1963–9) that Pearson had launched primarily to address English-French tensions.

As Institute director, Stewart oversaw the plans that turned its new building on Davenport Road into a Caravan pavilion. Paying homage to several nationalities, it offered an eclectic mix of "Steel Bands, Smorgasbord, Swiss Fondues, Canadian Folk Singers!" A "French-Canadian room" featured an exhibit of Quebec sculptures and recordings of folk songs. The room named after the nation's capital, Ottawa, displayed "Indian masks" and "Eskimo prints." A historical exhibit highlighted Canada's growth with maps and photographs. A bigger attraction was the outdoor dance area where people practised square-dance steps accompanied by a fiddler and caller, and danced polkas and modern dances under the twinkling Christmas lights. Every hour, a group of folk singers performed a set of Canadian folk songs. Most noteworthy was the Caribbean festival located in the auditorium, where the "hot rhythm of the Steel Band of Trinidad-Tobago" performed in "an island setting for dancing." Dressed in white billowing blouses, dark skirts, and colourful jewellery, the young Caribbean women of La Petite Musicale of Toronto also performed songs and dances.[80]

The Caribbean musicians recalled the Institute Calypso Nights of the early 1960s (see chapter 7) featuring, among others, Charles Roach, now a civil rights lawyer and co-founder of Caribana, the Caribbean festival launched two years previously as a Canadian Centennial project. If the small but important West Indian presence held out the promise of building a more racially inclusive Institute community, Roach's own belief in the power of music and culture to raise

Of the outdoor Bavarian Beer Garden at the Berlin pavilion (site of the German Canadian Club Harmonie, 410 Sherbourne Street), the Metro Caravan program wrote, "A six-piece oom-pah-pah band provides accompaniment for the visitors' sing-along, and Bavarian dancers entertain." York University Libraries, Clara Thomas Archives & Special Collections, Toronto Telegram fonds, ASC60822 (photographer Jac Holland, 26 June 1971).

the morale particularly of racialized immigrants, facilitate integration, and affect broader social change suggested some common ground with the Institute and Kossar. In a 1965 article published in the *Intercom,* Roach emphasized the need for Toronto's many ethnic groups to shift from creating enclaves of "intense cultural activity on a purely ethnic in-group basis" to transforming a stern Anglo-Saxon city lacking "joie-de-vivre" and "spirit" into a culturally vital place. He thought it would still take some time because, while the immigrants might be impressed by the city's wealth and modern services, and even benefit materially from its educational and job opportunities, alienation and fear of "rocking the boat" created a "feeling of emptiness" that kept these groups, even the numerous Italians, from becoming fully engaged.

Roach's understanding of "joie-de-vivre" as the "public expression of convivial fellowship in day-to-day living, in fashion, music, dance, theatre, art, sports and all leisure time activities" resembled that of the Institute and its cultural allies. But he differed from them in arguing that Torontonians, particularly the well-to-do, would play no role in injecting cultural spirit into the city core because they considered it a place of work and shopping, but not of living (which for them was the suburbs or the cottage). His suggestions for how immigrants accustomed "to a more spirited life-style" could "noticeably" change the city reflected a familiar mix of community-building techniques, such as dance and sports, and tourism-related strategies. Toronto, Roach argued, needed sporting events that reflected homeland cultures (which, in the West Indian case, included cricket matches and its attendant social practices), sidewalk cafes, public art, ethnic neighbourhood festivals in places like Kensington Market, Chinatown, and College Street's Little Italy, carnivals, and band concerts in High Park and Civic Square. Roach got into some semantic gymnastics, noting that "of course, the immigrant must be assimilated," but also that integration must be "a two-way street," thereby approximating the Institute's vision of both old and new Canadians becoming transformed through pluralist community-building.[81] But apart from some individual input, there was no evidence of direct Institute involvement in Caribana. Beyond Metro Caravan's multiracial performances, I did not detect an emerging multiracial alliance among Toronto's cultural entrepreneurs.

Behind the Festival Stage

How did a modestly funded agency mount an impressive array of cultural events? Well aware that their modest budget for cultural programming could hardly support their grand plans, Institute personnel mobilized people and resources in support of these events. Male board members with business, media, or political networks helped in attracting funds or recruiting dignitaries to attend or host an event. Business links also explain more commercialized events; for example, the organizer of a 1970 ski-themed Scandinavian Night owned the travel agency that sold the tickets for the weekend ski package.[82]

But it was the women administrators, staff, and volunteers who repeatedly made requests of everyone, from local ethnic bakeries and department stores (for prizes, decorations, and building supplies) to City Hall, Queen's Park, and Ottawa (for the grandees). Staffers recruited Institute members, both immigrants and "native-born" Canadians, to decorate rooms, make posters, and build booths. The Toronto Junior League and IODE volunteers used their networks to ensure that more "old" Canadians attended the events. Ethno-Canadian volunteers brought novelty items and recorded music for the carnivals. The network of YMCA and YWCA branches, and their Jewish counterparts,

offered the Institute space and co-hosted certain cultural events with them. The Institute women tapped the Local Councils of Women and men's service groups (Kiwanis, Rotary) to help with the opening teas and get their people out to the events. The Toronto Historical Board and other local societies provided materials for exhibits. This legwork was critical because the contributions helped to subsidize the events and keep Institute finances afloat. The dignitaries secured included city councillors, mayors, and citizenship judges as well as a few provincial ministers, such as Yaremko, and a few federal ministers, such as J.W. Pickersgill (as minister of immigration).[83]

The support of the Institute's affiliates, however fraught and complex the relationship, was essential to its cultural strategies. The Institute's 1960 roster of thirty affiliated organizations[84] included Anglo-Canadian groups (such as the Toronto Council of Friendship and Toronto Business & Professional Women's Club) and ethno-Canadian ones (including the Dutch Canadian Credit Union and the Italian Immigrant Aid Society). Especially important were the ethnic organizations and cultural groups because, in exchange for the access to Institute space for meetings or rehearsals, they agreed to help with the special cultural events. These heavily European groups included immigrant groups like the Canadian Lithuanian Association and ethno-Canadian ones like the Canadian Polish Congress.[85] Just as the West Indian Student Association's group membership probably helps to explain the Caribbean performances at the Institute, the membership of the Japanese Canadian Citizens Association likely explains the 1969 Japanese Night, which promised "classical Japanese dances," music, films, and dinner. Yet it still took more than two decades after the wartime internment and postwar dispersal to organize this goodwill gesture towards Toronto's Japanese Canadians.[86] Beholden to the "ethnic groups," Institute organizers were drawn into complex negotiations especially with the European groups whose participation they most sought.

Courting and Negotiating

Institute women courted individual immigrant and ethnic organizations, such as the Estonian Association of Toronto and German Canadian Club Harmonie, respectively. They reached out to the Toronto headquarters or branches of national federations that, like the Latvian National Federation in Canada (co-sponsor of 1957 Latvian Week) and the Hungarian Canadian Federation (co-sponsor of 1963 Hungarian Week), represented a variety of constituent groups. These groups' mostly male leaders included middle-class ethno-Canadians rebuilding an associational life dismantled by the war, and newcomers, also mostly middle-class in origin, who, like the Baltic refugees, ran various immigrant organizations. When an umbrella organization like the Canadian Polish Congress (CPC) agreed to co-sponsor an Institute Ethnic

Week, it took greater responsibility than its Canadian counterpart(s) to supply performers and exhibits, usually doing so by securing the participation of its affiliated folk-culture groups. Since the central body may well have helped its cultural affiliates cover the cost of costumes, instruments, and even, perhaps, an honorarium for the choreographers and choirmasters, their endorsement was essential.[87] This hierarchal arrangement was also gendered: ethnic male elites typically asked the women's auxiliary to plan a tea or concert while they came as special guests. The ethnic groups thus heavily subsidized the Toronto Institute's cultural pluralist mandate. Hence, the fulsome thanks issued to leaders like CPC president Z. Jaworski, whose organization co-sponsored the inaugural Polish Week, thus also ensuring the participation of the Canadian Polish Women's Federation as well as various performers, speakers, and arts and crafts groups. The Canadian co-sponsor for the event was the Catholic Women's League.[88]

The male ethnic elites and their cultural counterparts were hardly about to permit the Institute to dictate the terms of their participation in its spectacles. Rather, they used the immigrant-gifts platform to present their own historical narratives at Institute and wider city events. By so doing, they made culturally assertive claims for becoming a "third force" (after but equal to the English and French) in Canadian society and politics, a phrase that gained increasing traction during the B&B Commission discussions.[89] Of course, this is not surprising given their own investment both in matters of cultural preservation and historical commemoration and in the lobbying required to gain greater public recognition. In Toronto as elsewhere, ethnic groups had long used performance, ethnic regalia, and pageantry to commemorate their group's history and to assert their historical narratives and ethnic (as well as political or religious) identity both in their halls and out on the streets. In some respects, the war dampened such activity, but in others, as with the Ukrainian Canadians suspected of "divided loyalties" (to either Nazi Germany or Communist Russia), both the conservative (nationalist) and progressive (left) organizations increased their cultural activity in large part to demonstrate their loyalty to Canada and the Allies.[90]

A combination of factors, which included post-1945 migration, a growing white-ethnic lobby, and folk revival,[91] served to intensify this cultural activity. Some groups, both older ethno-Canadian and recently arrived groups, proved highly adept at asserting their cultural presence. These included both conservatives – such as the nationalist and virulently anti-Communist Ukrainian Canadians and Ukrainian displaced persons who advocated for a Soviet-free Ukraine – and leftists – such as the Greek immigrants who opposed the military junta that ruled Greece during the period 1967–74. Institute leaders like West routinely accepted invitations to attend the cultural events of their affiliated ethnic groups, whether concerts in support of refugees or anniversaries

commemorating highly symbolic victories or tragedies. In doing so, they acted as public witnesses to the group's history and proud cultural traditions. For the Eastern European groups, the events often commemorated an uprising against the Soviet Union or celebrations of the persistence of their customs despite Soviet repression.[92] Then, too, the ethnic groups brought to the Institute performances that emphasized an exalted ethnicity. The 1969 Greek Night, for example, saw the wife of the organizer, social work student Alec Economides, and others reciting poems from such Greek classics as Constantine Cavafy's "Waiting for the Barbarians," and from English poet Lord Byron's "The Islands of Greece." The folk troupes included members of a Greek youth club named "Alexander the Great."[93]

The idea that folk festivals offered a therapeutic multiculturalism that glossed over material difficulties is based in some truth. The folklorist Robert Klymasz referred to the "universal ability of folklore to bridge the gaps of time and to meet the needs of today by providing an ever-ready vehicle that, without fail, always leads jaded appetites to an amazingly rich and seemingly limitless source of entertainment, instruction, wonder, and pride."[94] This stance must be tempered, however, by an understanding of the tactical cultural politics involved. The ethnic-group sponsors of Institute events could and did influence the "Canadian" reception of their cultural productions. If, for instance, Mayor Summerville's presence at the start of the 1963 Hungarian Week explains the mainstream news coverage it garnered, Gabor Temesevary, president of the co-sponsoring Hungarian Canadian Federation, largely shaped its Cold War tone and content. In a positive review in the populist *Toronto Telegram*, the reporter quoted Temesevary at length. Those words urged readers to appreciate that "the treasured possessions" and "vital artistic traditions" on display were brought to Canada by people "who loved their art so much" they packed "paintings and art objects into their suitcases" even as they were fleeing the Communists after the war and "the 1956 Hungarian bloodbath." Temesevary's comments captured the Institute goals while placing at centre stage his group's historical narrative of folklore (and art) preservation under Soviet Communism.[95] Latvian, Polish, Byelorussian, and other exhibits at Institute events similarly illustrate how the cultural assertion of ethnic leaders helped to shape Canadian-led public commemorations of their group's place in Canada's history and thus its role in an imagined pluralist future. Their endorsement of the Institute's cultural events gave their respective cultural custodians, both men and women, a pluralist public space in which to showcase their folk cultures while providing an "appropriate" narrative.[96]

The mixed-gender group of choirmasters and choreographers who led the folk troupes and choirs at the Institute's events and the mega folk festivals took seriously their role as cultural guardians of their group's "authentic" folklore customs, and directly helped to shape their troupe's particular repertoire. Some

of the (mostly male) cultural impresarios might well offer new but still "authentic" (as in respectful) interpretations of a folk song or dance. (In this regard, folk cultures are hardly static.)[97] One might view these cultural promoters as liberal anti-modernists keen to charm their mixed audiences through nostalgic or enchanting performances invoking a simpler or romantic past. After all, European male choral groups like the Kodály choirs performed a folk repertoire shaped by nationalist composers, such as Kodály and Bartók, who had sought to nurture what they claimed was a pure ancestral culture against the forces of modernization and political upheavals. But they also understood the larger political goals at stake. The Eastern European groups so active in the Institute's programs already imbued their folk culture with deep political meaning. When the struggle for national independence was suppressed in Soviet countries, it fell to the diaspora to pursue national survival. Performing groups like the Kodály Choir saw themselves as engaged in a modern political project of nation rebuilding in Canada, one in which their own histories, and present and future, had to be made to count, both symbolically and politically, in a reimagined city and nation. It was equally true for the other ethnic groups who placed their cultural products, from ceramics to music, on the public stage.[98]

All this made for complicated negotiations. The commitments that ethnic leaders and cultural representatives had to their own community's calendar of events, for example, placed limits on their support for Institute events, leading to postponements or cancellations of plans.[99] Institute leaders were delighted with the large turnout for Metro Caravan '69, but with so many of their usual ethno-cultural contacts busy at their own pavilions, they partnered with less prominent groups like the Swiss Club.[100] Ethnic rivalries also created tensions. The frequent complaints about there being too few or too many of this or that group in a show reflected the political value of folk cultures to the increasing ethnicization of Canadian politics in these decades.[101] It was part of what scholars have described as the dialectical dance of accommodation and resistance the ethnic groups carried out with their Canadian hosts, refusing to be supplanted, and demanding, in exchange for their participation, more political clout.[102] The Cold War context meant that, with the rare exception, pro-Communist groups were not invited to the dance. Ironically, though, the fact that the era's folk music travelled partly through the children of left-wing Ukrainian Canadian and other Euro-Canadian groups, and some leftist newcomers, meant that some left-leaning performers and folklorists undoubtedly participated in the Institute's cultural events.[103]

Significantly, the long-time ethnic rivalries that occasionally erupted into bitter conflict over particular events did not derail the Institute's cultural programs. In 1963, for example, some Slavic groups objected to Hungarian Week on the ground that Hungarians were "totalitarians" with a history of mistreating Slavic minorities (Croatians, Slovenians, Ruthenians, and Slovaks). Denouncing the

Hungarians as "the last of the wild Asians to come from a nation in Europe" and tyrannical perpetrators of a "cruel despotism and terrorism" against Slavic ethnic nationals, the Slavic Ethnic Club demanded a stop to the "propaganda" for this "retrograde race." The Captive Nations Club, a refugee group representing Eastern European nations under Soviet control, declared that Hungarians were "mongolian creatures" who "do not belong to the European mosaic of culture[d] nations."[104] But the Hungarian Week went ahead as planned.

The Institute's success at attracting to its special events a much larger and greater mix of people than its house programs – the major concerts often filled the 1,000-seat auditorium and an average of 300 people attended the opening tea and concert for the Ethnic and Canadiana Weeks – owed much to the ethnic sponsors.[105] It explains why the Institute never planned a special event without consulting with their affiliated (and other) ethnic organizations and the gushing thank-you letters sent to the men who headed them.[106] Even so, Institute folks always wished for more Anglo-Torontonians in the audience, and that more of them came from the "wider public" beyond their own networks.

Overlapping and Competing Pluralisms?

Nations, note theorists and historians of the nation-state, are not natural or primordial entities but rather constructions forged in contested contexts, and they invariably involve the manipulation of historical myths and symbols or the invention of traditions.[107] As middle-class pluralists who, despite some significant differences, shared an interest in harnessing folk cultures to a modern nation-building project, the Institute women and their ethnic collaborators fit a portrait of bourgeois elites whose nationalist ideology reflected not the aspirations of the masses but their own agendas. Those agendas both overlapped – as in the shared Cold War claim that liberal multiculturalism would act as a bulwark against Communism – and competed. In regard to the latter, the Institute women and their male colleagues envisioned an Anglo-Canadian nation repeatedly replenished and enriched but never entirely replaced by immigrant and ethnic folk cultures while the ethnic community leaders with whom they interacted increasingly adopted a third-force thesis in favour of multiculturalism. To that end, ethnic leaders and cultural allies might well adopt a strategy of cultural essentialism: presenting one's folk forms as timeless and unchanging bolstered claims about ethnic distinctiveness and the need to promote ethnic diversity. Within politically polarized groups like the Ukrainian Canadian community, anti-Communist elites used the strategy to condemn the left-wing opponents interested in cultural exchanges with Soviet Ukraine.[108]

Both the Institute and the ethnic groups understood the value of the media in communicating their vision of a multicultural Toronto and Canada to wider publics. Hence, the Institute's frequent requests to mainstream and

ethno-Canadian radio and television journalists, producers, and personalities to cover their events. West in particular established a rapport with certain members of the ethnic press club, though their attendance at events was spotty. The biggest catch was mainstream media personality John Collingwood Reade, host of a popular multi-ethnic music and culture program on CFRB Radio called *Canadians All*. An English immigrant proud of his British heritage and a well-travelled man reportedly "curious" about other cultures, Reade's reputation as a "new-style" broadcaster with a talent for personalizing the news received a boost during the war, when he contributed to the BBC's *Britain Speaks* overseas broadcasts. Described as "a skilled writer" who approached the radio as "theatre of the mind," Reade's dramatic delivery made him a popular master of ceremonies. A valued "friend" of the Institute, Reade hosted various Institute shows and folk-festival performances. A 1960 session of *Canadians All* that he broadcast from the Institute had a racially diverse line-up that included European troupes and choirs as well as an Asian Indian dance group, a Japanese judo act, a Chinese dragon dance, and a Black gospel choir.[109] Then, too, the eclecticism of the Institute shows fit well the variety show format that was a staple of 1960s and 1970s television. At a time when CBC Radio featured folk programs and ethnic folk festivals were getting some television coverage, the Institute's efforts to use the media to project a multicultural Toronto to the nation through folk culture was making some headway before the agency's demise.[110]

Equally important was the English Canadian context. Many scholars agree that, by the 1960s (if not earlier), a Canadian national culture rooted primarily in British traditions was in tatters and, in the view of some, that the decade saw a civic understanding of citizenship and growing support for multiculturalism replacing the British heritage model.[111] Others have accorded the multiculturalists, from Pierre Trudeau himself to the ethnic protest lobby that emerged during the 1960s, a more significant role in promoting a social good, however complicated its implementation might have proved.[112] Yet, the shrewd tactics involved cannot be ignored: as still others note, official multiculturalism within a bilingual framework offered a means out of the constitutional and other challenges posed by Quebec nationalism and separatism and by the Red Power, New Left, feminist, and other radical forces that produced the tumultuous 1960s. By placating the leaders of the Ukrainian Canadian–led ethnic lobby that emerged during the B&B Commission, Trudeau sidestepped other demands for equality and self-determination. In exchange for multiculturalism, the mostly European lobby could act as a counterweight to Quebec.[113]

The Toronto Institute's cultural pluralism and that of its allies and collaborators suggest some revision or refinement of these points. First, Institute-style cultural pluralism assumed that, like the expanding treasure chest, immigrant and ethnic folk cultures would enrich the nation culturally – the Institute women truly delighted in the opportunity to create a more cosmopolitan

culture (see chapter 11) – but without undermining the core values that owed much to its British heritage. It was not that they wanted non-English-speaking people to be turned into model British ones. Like their colourful and boisterous but scripted shows, they understood multiculturalism as a means of ordering difference and ensuring the loyalty of the many to the nation. As for José Igartua's argument about English Canada's rapid transformation in the 1960s from a British-blood-and-culture to a rights-based definition of citizenship, the Institute's multi-ethnic performances and multicultural spectacles (along with its uneven efforts to promote human rights and liberal internationalist ideals) contributed towards an increasing acceptance particularly of European forms of cultural difference. Even before 1960, Institute personnel embraced a bold and aggressive, though heavily Eurocentric, pluralism. However, as members of an English Canadian middle-class cultural elite, the Institute women – who, after all, included leading IODE members – never abandoned a commitment to a British-defined version of cultural pluralism.[114]

The Institute's Anglo-Canadian cultural pluralism also came up against the ethnic pluralism of its ethnic collaborators and allies, and, to a lesser extent, its heavily European staffers. The affiliated ethnic groups increasingly articulated the terms of their invited participation in Institute events and wider collaborations in the vocabulary of the ethnic lobby that protested the B&B Commission's two-founding nations narrative of Canada. Third-force aspirations affected the Toronto Institute's relations particularly with the Eastern European elites and their ethnocultural representatives, both ethno-Canadians and refugee émigrés, who would participate in or follow the briefs, hearings, and conferences held by the ethnic lobby during the years of the B&B Commission.[115] The non–Eastern European elites also understood the importance of using the Institute's immigrant-gifts platform for inserting their cultural narratives into the mainstream agenda.

This third-force momentum explains not only why so many cultural groups participated in these events, but why their heads urged the Institute to "go big" with the ethnic festivals. A case in point is a 1961 meeting to discuss plans to launch a major "cultural festival." Institute board and CFAC member Stephen Davidovich, yet another nationalist Ukrainian Canadian to promote the third-force thesis in favour of multiculturalism, stressed the ethnic groups' collective "responsibility" to help in "creating a favourable image of the third element to Canadians as a whole," and to do so here by "working together" for "the promotion of a kaleidoscopic image of Canada." Using the Institute's own metaphor of a "United Nations in miniature," still another Ukrainian Canadian representative, Jaroslav Bilak, urged that the "plan should be big," adding, "the Ukrainian and other groups are interested in bigness." The Croatian delegate agreed and advised "exploiting" all the "TV" contacts while his Hungarian counterpart stressed as well the importance of "first class talent of which there was plenty

available." Summing up, Kossar proposed "a miniature grandstand show, handcraft, art, and industrial fair."[116] In this, as in similar instances, the Western and Southern European leaders agreed, and, during the 1960s, some of these grand plans materialized.

Conclusion

On the eve of Metro Caravan '72, which took place a year after Canada became the first nation in the world to adopt multiculturalism as official policy, Caravan host Kossar was busy doing interviews. He boasted to reporters that while "the [federal] government relatively recently discovered multi-culturalism," people like himself, his wife Zena, and many other Torontonians already knew that "multiculturalism has been alive and living in Canada for years," and that "Caravan has been making It work for years."[117] The roots of contemporary Toronto's bold, brash, and highly commercialized "super multiculturalism" are diverse, but one set of them lies with the cultural spectacles in which the Institute played a leading or coordinating role, including the Institute Ethnic Weeks and folk festivals, the Nationbuilders shows, and Metro Caravan.[118]

Another striking feature of Canadian multiculturalism is how quickly many Anglo-Canadians evidently accepted Trudeau's 1971 vision statement of a multicultural nation within a bilingual framework.[119] They may well have been ready for the message because of the waning (but still tenacious) British vision of Canadian nationhood, and the need to replace it with something else. The tremendous success of Metro Caravan speaks volumes to the ability of Anglo and ethnic liberal multiculturalists to nudge Anglo-Canadians through non-threatening spectacle and tourism to partake of other cultures. Trudeau's pronouncement would not have gained such quick traction without near-grassroots activism, in Toronto at least. The Institute women and their male colleagues were laying such a groundwork from the 1950s onward, though they could not have done so without the participation of the ethnic elites and ethnocultural groups whose own agendas both overlapped with and diverged from that of the Institute.

More than simply representing a particular kind of post-colonial Canadian pluralist nationalism, the Toronto Institute in the late 1950s, the 1960s, and early 1970s was popularizing its gifts and spectacle pluralism among large numbers of ordinary people. Like earlier iterations of liberal cultural pluralism, that mandate was rooted in a paradoxical strategy of affecting a more pluralistic and integrated society through the celebration and appropriation of the "authentic" cultures (understood mainly as folk cultures) of sequential waves of immigrants and their subsequent descendants. For Toronto Institute folks, the process of Canadianization, which invariably involved some homogenizing of ethnic cultures along dominant Canadian norms, and pluralism existed in

symbiotic relationship to each other. In this context, taking in an Institute intercultural or multicultural event involved a positive, indeed enriching, process of absorbing the "other" and rendering it Canadian. While seemingly apolitical folklore was preferred, the politicization of folk culture, especially when it cast a harsh light on Communism, was also acceptable in the Cold War era. Although it folded in 1974, the Toronto Institute, like the US affiliates, and wider cultural gifts movement, influenced late-twentieth-century multiculturalism in both nations, as evidenced by a familiar immigrant-gifts discourse, a privileging of European customs, and an emphasis on cultural celebration that sidesteps the harsh material realities of immigrant life. Nevertheless, this activism helped pave the way for the wider acceptance of a (Eurocentric) multiculturalism in Canada after 1971, that is, multiculturalism in a specifically modernist, nation-building mode. The activism of the Institute women and their male allies belongs alongside other sixties-era developments that, in a positive or negative way, helped to create the ideology of "official" multiculturalism before Trudeau announced it.